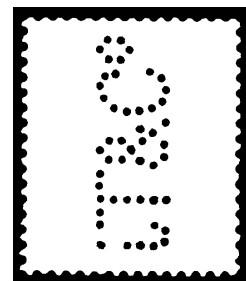


John Conrad im Thurn.

Roy Gault

Alastair Walter, John Mathews, John Nelson, and Maurice Harp all responded in a variety of ways to the ‘Foreign Bill Jigsaw’ article that appeared in Bulletin No.339. A common theme in their comments was the ‘im’ portion of the company name ‘J C im Thurn & Co’ probably acting as ‘von’ does in Germany and ‘van (der)’ does in Holland. My fixation with a ‘reversed J’ has now been blown away in favour of a lower-case ‘I’ and as a result the die becomes **I2510.01**. Apologies for leading you all up the garden path!

John Conrad im Thurn is listed in the 1851 census as a ‘General Commerce Merchant’ living in East Dulwich, aged 40, and born in Switzerland. With him was his 4 year old son, also called John Conrad in Thurn, and his wife, Mary Catherine, who was born in Bermuda, West Indies. He can also be traced in the 1861 census (aged 52).



I2510.01

By the time of the 1881 census he was living in Tormoham*, Devon, aged 72 and probably about to retire, but still described himself as a ‘Merchant’. His son ‘John C im Thurn’ is also listed in the 1881 census as a General Merchant, aged 34, living in Camberwell, Surrey.

* I’ve never heard of Tormoham and it doesn’t appear in my Gazetteer of England. Does it ring any bells with anyone?

Trade directories show that sometime between 1877 and 1882, ‘J C im Thurn & Co’ became known as ‘J C im Thurn & Sons’, no doubt with John Conrad im Thurn (junior) as one of the ‘Sons’. From stamp details, we know the die I2510.01 was in use 1875-1877, and so dates from the time John Conrad im Thurn (senior) was in charge of the company.

In passing, John Conrad im Thurn (jnr) had a son called John Knowles im Thurn (1881-1956) who served in the Royal Navy, rising through the ranks to become a vice-Admiral in 1934, ... but we digress!